

IN THE CLAIMS

Upon entry of the present amendment, the status of the claims will be as is shown below. This listing of claims replaces all previous versions and listings of claims in the present application.

1. (Currently Amended) An optical amplifier apparatus comprising:

- a first front-end optical fiber amplifier that amplifies incident light;
- a first front-end pumping light source that generates first pumping light supplied to said first front-end optical fiber amplifier;
- a first front-end pumping light introducing section means that introduces the first pumping light to said first front-end optical fiber amplifier;
- a first back-end optical fiber amplifier that amplifies outgoing light of said first front-end optical fiber amplifier;
- a second front-end optical fiber amplifier;
- a second front-end pumping light source that generates second pumping light supplied to said second front-end optical fiber amplifier;
- a second front-end pumping light introducing section means that introduces the second pumping light to said second front-end optical fiber amplifier from an outgoing side which is opposite to an incident side;
- a second back-end optical fiber amplifier that amplifies outgoing light of said second front-end optical fiber amplifier;
- a back-end pumping light source that generates third pumping light supplied to said first back-end optical fiber amplifier;

a back-end pumping light introducing ~~section means~~ that introduces the third pumping light to said first back-end optical fiber amplifier; and

an optical connecting ~~section means~~ that (1) connects an outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and said back-end pumping light introducing ~~section means~~ to each other, or (2) connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and the incident side of said second front-end optical fiber amplifier to each other and the outgoing side of said second back-end amplifier optical fiber amplifier and said back-end pumping light introducing section to each other ~~thereby causing the second front-end optical fiber amplifier to amplify outgoing light of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier.~~

2. (Currently Amended) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising: a light blocking ~~section means~~ that blocks light from said first back-end optical fiber amplifier from being provided to said first front-end optical fiber amplifier.

3. (Cancelled).

4. (Currently Amended) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 1, wherein if said ~~optical connecting means connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and said back-end pumping light introducing means to each other,~~ a gain of said first front-end optical fiber amplifier is set so that as large as a noise of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier can be neglected when said optical connecting section connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and said back-end pumping light introducing section to each other.

5. (Currently Amended) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 4, wherein if ~~said optical connecting means connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and the incident side of said second front-end optical fiber amplifier to each other~~, a combined gain of the gain of said first front-end optical fiber amplifier, a gain of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier, and a gain of said second front-end optical fiber amplifier is set so that as large as a noise of outgoing light of said second back-end optical fiber amplifier is approximately maintained when said optical connecting section connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and the incident side of said second front-end optical fiber amplifier to each other.

6. (Currently Amended) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 1, wherein when if said optical connecting section means connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and said back-end pumping light introducing section means to each other, a wavelength band of the outgoing light of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier is the C-band.

7. (Currently Amended) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 1, wherein when if said optical connecting section means connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and the incident side of said second front-end optical fiber amplifier to each other, a wavelength band of the outgoing light of said second back-end optical fiber amplifier is the L-band.

8. (Original) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said first front-end optical fiber amplifier, said first back-end optical fiber amplifier, said second front-end optical fiber amplifier, and said second back-end optical fiber amplifier is an Erbium-doped optical fiber.

9. (Original) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 1, wherein wavelengths of the light generated by said first front-end pumping light source, said second front-end pumping light source, and said back-end pumping light source are 980 nm.

10. (Withdrawn) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 1, comprising:

- a third front-end optical fiber amplifier that amplifies the outgoing light of said second front-end optical fiber amplifier, and emits amplified light to said second back-end optical fiber amplifier;

- a third front-end pumping light source that generates fourth pumping light supplied to said third front-end optical fiber amplifier; and

- a third front-end pumping light introducing means that introduces the fourth pumping light to said third front-end optical fiber amplifier from an outgoing side which is opposite to an incident side.

11. (Withdrawn) An optical amplifier apparatus comprising:

- a first optical fiber amplifier that amplifies incident light;

- a second optical fiber amplifier;

a back-end pumping light source that generates pumping light supplied to said first optical fiber amplifier;

a back-end pumping light introducing means that introduces the pumping light to said first optical fiber amplifier; and

an optical connecting means that (1) connects an outgoing side of said first optical fiber amplifier and said back-end pumping light introducing means to each other, or (2) connects the outgoing side of said first optical fiber amplifier and an incident side of said second optical fiber amplifier to each other thereby causing the second optical fiber amplifier to amplify the outgoing light of said first optical fiber amplifier.

12. (Currently Amended) An optical amplifier apparatus comprising:

a first front-end optical fiber amplifier that amplifies incident light;

a first front-end pumping light source that generates first pumping light supplied to said first front-end optical fiber amplifier;

a first front-end pumping light coupler that introduces the first pumping light to said first front-end optical fiber amplifier;

a first back-end optical fiber amplifier that amplifies outgoing light of said first front-end optical fiber amplifier;

a second front-end optical fiber amplifier;

a second front-end pumping light source that generates second pumping light supplied to said second front-end optical fiber amplifier;

a second front-end pumping light coupler that introduces the second pumping light to said second front-end optical fiber amplifier from an outgoing side which is opposite to an incident side;

a second back-end optical fiber amplifier that amplifies outgoing light of said second front-end optical fiber amplifier;

a back-end pumping light source that generates third pumping light supplied to said first back-end optical fiber amplifier;

a back-end pumping light coupler that introduces the third pumping light to said first back-end optical fiber amplifier; and

an optical switch that (1) connects an outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and said back-end pumping light coupler to each other, or (2) connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and the incident side of said second front-end optical fiber amplifier to each other and the outgoing side of said second back-end amplifier optical fiber amplifier and said back-end pumping light coupler to each other ~~thereby causing the second front-end optical fiber amplifier to amplify outgoing light of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier.~~

13. (Currently Amended) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 12, comprising an optical isolator that blocks light from said first back-end optical fiber amplifier from being provided to said first front-end optical fiber amplifier.

14. (Cancelled).

15. (Currently Amended) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 12, wherein ~~if said optical switch connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and said back-end pumping light coupler to each other,~~ a gain of said first front-end optical fiber amplifier is set so that as large as a noise of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier can be neglected when said optical switch connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and said back-end pumping light coupler to each other.

16. (Currently Amended) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 15, wherein ~~if said optical switch connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and the incident side of said second front-end optical fiber amplifier to each other,~~ a combined gain of the gain of said first front-end optical fiber amplifier, a gain of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier, and a gain of said second front-end optical fiber amplifier is set so that as large as a noise of outgoing light of said second back-end optical fiber amplifier is approximately maintained when said optical switch connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and the incident side of said second front-end optical fiber amplifier to each other.

17. (Currently Amended) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 12, wherein ~~if said optical switch connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and said back-end pumping light coupler to each other,~~ a wavelength band of the outgoing light of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier is the C-band when said optical switch connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and said back-end pumping light coupler to each other.

18. (Currently Amended) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 12, wherein ~~if said optical switch connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and the incident side of said second front-end optical fiber amplifier to each other,~~ a wavelength band of the outgoing light of said second back-end optical fiber amplifier is the L-band when said optical switch connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and the incident side of said second front-end optical fiber amplifier to each other.

19. (Previously Presented) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 12, wherein at least one of said first front-end optical fiber amplifier, said first back-end optical fiber amplifier, said second front-end optical fiber amplifier, and said second back-end optical fiber amplifier is an Erbium-doped optical fiber.

20. (Previously Presented) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 12, wherein wavelengths of the light generated by said first front-end pumping light source, said second front-end pumping light source, and said back-end pumping light source are 980 nm.

21. (Currently Amended) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising:

    a third front-end optical fiber amplifier that amplifies the outgoing light of said second front-end optical fiber amplifier, and emits amplified light to said second back-end optical fiber amplifier;

    a third front-end pumping light source that generates fourth pumping light supplied to said third front-end optical fiber amplifier; and



a third front-end pumping light coupler that introduces the fourth pumping light to said third front-end optical fiber amplifier from an outgoing side which is opposite to an incident side.

22. (Currently Amended) An optical amplifier apparatus comprising:

a first optical fiber amplifier that amplifies incident light;

a second optical fiber amplifier;

a back-end pumping light source that generates pumping light supplied to said first optical fiber amplifier;

a back-end pumping light coupler that introduces the pumping light to said first optical fiber amplifier; and

an optical switch that (1) connects an outgoing side of said first optical fiber amplifier and said back-end pumping light coupler to each other, or (2) connects the outgoing side of said first optical fiber amplifier and an incident side of said second optical fiber amplifier to each other and the outgoing side of said second back-end amplifier optical fiber amplifier and said back-end pumping light introducing coupler to each other ~~thereby causing the second front-end optical fiber amplifier to amplify outgoing light of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier.~~

23. (New) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 1, wherein a wavelength band of the outgoing light of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier is the C-band when said optical switch connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and said back-end pumping light coupler to each other.

24. (New) The optical amplifier apparatus according to claim 1, wherein a wavelength band of the outgoing light of said second back-end optical fiber amplifier is the L-band when said optical switch connects the outgoing side of said first back-end optical fiber amplifier and the incident side of said second front-end optical fiber amplifier to each other.